# Option B: Psychology of sport (15 hours)

### Individual differences – 4 hours

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| **Group** |  | **Assessment statement** | **Obj** | **Teacher’s notes** |
|  | B.1.1 | Define the term *personality*. | 1 | There are many definitions of personality; for the purpose of this course the following definition will be used.  “Those relatively stable and enduring aspects of individuals which distinguish them from other people, making them unique but at the same time permit a comparison between individuals”*.* (Gross, 1992)  **TOK:** There is significant disagreement in personality research regarding issues of validity, reliability and sophistication of theoretical models. |
|  | B.1.2 | Discuss social learning theory and personality. | 3 | Limit to Bandura’s (1977) social learning theory. |
|  | B.1.3 | Discuss the interactionist approach to personality. | 3 |  |
|  | B.1.4 | Outline issues associated with the measurement of personality. | 2 | Limit to:   * data collection (interviews, questionnaires, observing behaviour) * validity and reliability issues * ethical issues: confidentiality, use of results, predicting performance.   **TOK:** Issues relating to measurement. |
|  | B.1.5 | Evaluate the issues in personality research and sports performance. | 3 | Consider athletes versus non-athletes, personality and sport type, predicting performance. Refer  to the positions adopted by the skeptical and credulous groups of psychologists. |

### Motivation – 3 hours

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| **Group** |  | **Assessment statement** | **Obj** | **Teacher’s notes** |
|  | B.2.1 | Define the term *motivation*. | 1 | Motivation is “the internal mechanisms and external stimuli which arouse and direct our behaviour” (Sage, 1974). |
|  | B.2.2 | Outline the types of motivation. | 2 | Limit to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theory. |
|  | B.2.3 | Discuss the issues associated with the use of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in sports and exercise. | 3 | Limit to how extrinsic rewards influence intrinsic motivation.  Extrinsic rewards seen as controlling of behaviour.  Extrinsic rewards providing information about their level of performance.  Extrinsic rewards will enhance intrinsic motivation when the reward provides positive information with regard to the performer’s level of competence. |
|  | B.2.4 | Describe Atkinson’s model of Achievement Motivation. | 2 |  |
|  | B.2.5 | Outline Goal Orientation theory. | 2 | Limit to:   * reasons for participation (achievement goals) * differing meanings that success or failure has for the performer (task versus outcome orientation). |
|  | B.2.6 | Describe Attribution Theory and its application to sport and exercise. | 2 | Limit to Weiner’s classification for causal attributions.   * Locus of stability * Locus of causality * Locus of control * Self-serving bias * Learned helplessness |

### Mental preparation for sport – 4 hours

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| **Group** |  | **Assessment statement** | **Obj** | **Teacher’s notes** |
|  | B.3.1 | Define the term *arousal*. | 1 |  |
|  | B.3.2 | Describe the theoretical approaches to arousal. | 2 | Limit to:   * drive reduction theory * inverted-U hypothesis * catastrophe theory. |

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| **Group** |  | **Assessment statement** | **Obj** | **Teacher’s notes** |
|  | B.3.3 | Draw and label a graphical representation of the arousal performance relationship. | 1 | Refer to the theories of arousal in B.3.2. |
|  | B.3.4 | Discuss the emotions that may influence an athlete’s  performance or experience in a physical activity. | 3 | Participation in sport and exercise influences a range of participant emotions such as depression, anxiety, and pleasure. Limit to a discussion of  the emotions that may be prevalent in physical activity. This may include:   * positive emotions such as excitement, relief, pride * negative emotions such as anger, guilt, shame, anxiety, boredom * specific emotions that have a discrete effect on performance (eg a negative mood is more likely to prime us to remember negative memories of past failures, and thus reduce our feelings of confidence to perform; eg a positive mood is more likely to prime us to remember positive previous outcomes, and increase our confidence to perform). |
|  | B.3.5 | Define the term *anxiety.* | 1 |  |
|  | B.3.6 | Distinguish between *cognitive*  and *somatic anxiety*. | 2 |  |
|  | B.3.7 | Distinguish between *trait* and  *state anxiety*. | 2 |  |
|  | B.3.8 | Evaluate how anxiety is measured. | 3 | Limit to:   * trait anxiety: Sport Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) * state anxiety: Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2R).   **TOK:** Issues relating to measurement. |
|  | B.3.9 | Describe the stress process in sport. | 2 | Defined as a substantial imbalance between the demand (physical and/or psychological) and response capability, under conditions where failure to meet that demand has important consequences.  Include: (i) causes of stress (environmental demand), (ii) stress response (person’s reactions), (iii) stress experience (psychological interpretation), (iv) actual behavior (outcome). |

### Psychological skills training – 3 hours

The competitive process is complex and multifaceted. A performer is affected by a range of factors (personality, motivation, arousal, emotional effect). One aim of a sports psychologist is to manipulate these factors to enhance optimal performance. This section examines several fundamental interventions and evaluates their benefits and limitations.

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| **Group** |  | **Assessment statement** | **Obj** | **Teacher’s notes** |
|  | B.4.1 | Discuss psychological skills training (PST). | 3 | Refers to the systematic and consistent practice of mental or psychological skills.  Include the following issues. PST: (i) is not just for elite athletes (ii) is not just for problem athletes (iii) does not provide quick fix solutions.  Consider the three phases of a PST program: (i) education (ii) acquisition (iii) practice. |
|  | B.4.2 | Outline goal setting. | 2 | Include:   * associated with enhancing self-confidence and motivation * SMARTER (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time, evaluate, review) goals * types of goals (outcome, performance, process). |
|  | B.4.3 | Evaluate mental imagery. | 3 | Associated with concentration enhancement, self- confidence, skill acquisition, emotional control, practice strategy and coping with pain and injury.  Include:   * external and internal imagery * protocol for imagery interventions. |
|  | B.4.4 | Outline relaxation techniques. | 2 | Associated with arousal regulation, reducing somatic and cognitive anxiety.  Include: (i) progressive muscular relaxation (PMR)  (ii) breathing techniques (iii) biofeedback. |
|  | B.4.5 | Outline self-talk techniques. | 2 | Associated with concentration, attention, cognitive regulation and motivation enhancement.  Include:   * positive and negative self-talk * thought stopping. |